

CORPORATE  
INVOLVEMENT  
IN EDUCATION

SAFE AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS

# safe and drug-free schools

"Every school will be  
strong, safe, drug-free,  
and disciplined."

The Seven Priorities of the U.S. Department of Education

## CORPORATE INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

The vast majority of America's schools are safe places. Two decades of comprehensive research support this conclusion. While the recent tragedies across the country may create the impression that violence is pervasive, such incidents at school are extremely rare. Nonetheless, we must address the violence that does exist and find better ways to ensure that all our children have safe, orderly school environments in which to learn and grow.

A healthy environment conducive to learning and limited in distraction can be established through a cooperative effort among schools, parents, businesses and communities. Many communities are finding practical ways to provide children with the safe and disciplined conditions they need and expect to find in a school. Promoting smaller schools—which research has shown significantly increases achievement and decreases the number of behavioral problems, particularly among disadvantaged students—and creating after-school programs that keep children productive and off the streets are just two of the ways that help foster children's success.

# safe & drug-free

## 21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

One way businesses can help make the after-school hours safer for our children and the community is to connect with programs that provide extended learning opportunities.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program was established to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to enable them to plan, implement, or expand projects that benefit the educational, health, social service, cultural and recreational needs of the community. A key component in the effort to keep children safe and learning, these school-based centers can provide drug-free, supervised, and cost-effective after-school, weekend or summer havens for children, youth, and their families.

By enabling schools to stay open longer, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program establishes a safe place for doing homework, intensive mentoring in basic skills, drug and violence prevention counseling, and academic enrichment activities. Technology education programs, services for children with disabilities, and instructional and performance programs in the arts are also vital activities that augment student development. Because Community Learning Centers provide a variety of activities, the grants are designed to promote partnerships among a variety of groups, such as schools, families, businesses, and community organizations, which plan and implement the programs.

"Why are after-school programs so important?

Because children's minds don't close down at  
3:00 p.m., and neither should their schools."

U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

# schools

## Examples of Businesses Supporting After-School Programs

### 21st Century Community Learning Centers Partnership

Businesses can partner with local schools and work with them to apply for Department of Education funding for after-school programs.

21st Century Community Learning Center grants are targeted to high-need rural and urban communities. These grants are designed to promote a collaborative effort between public schools, non-profit agencies, organizations, businesses, educational entities, and recreational, cultural and other community groups.

The activities supported by the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program should offer significantly expanded learning opportunities for children and youth in a given community, as well as contribute to reducing drug use and violence. Other activities may include:

- Literacy education programs;
- Children's day-care services;
- Summer and weekend school programs in conjunction with recreational programs;
- Integrated education, health, social service, recreational, or cultural programs;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs for individuals of all ages; and
- Employment counseling, training, and placement services for individuals with disabilities.

In Arizona, Project Sano y Salvo (Safe and Sound) will establish three Community Learning Centers in three middle schools in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). The Centers will provide extended learning and enrichment opportunities for students plagued by high rates of poverty, discipline problems, and academic underachievement. All activities—from academic enrichment and summer school to cultural and recreational programs—are designed to reduce suspensions, probation rates and incidences of violent offenses by students and to raise academic achievement. Partners involved with TUSD include two local car dealerships whose employees—Jim Click Ford and O'Reilly Chevrolet—commit to tutor students and offer homework assistance.

The Wellington, Kansas, Unified School District 353 is using the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant as a catalyst for renewed investment in education in the community. The Wellington Chamber of Commerce and Marconi Precision Aerostructures, among many others, have teamed up with the school district to form a Partnership Advisory Board. Dedicated to crafting a realistic and dynamic program to improve the learning environment of this poor rural community, the partnership will consolidate resources and strengthen current individual efforts for after-school programs. Planned activities include providing homework tutoring, exploring interests and careers, and working to improve math and reading skills using diagnostic software. Parenting classes will also address high-risk behaviors in children and offer expert support on pointing adolescents in the right direction.

In Allentown, Pennsylvania, the community is working to provide extended learning opportunities and a place for greater involvement through its school-based Family Centers around the Lehigh Valley. Open to residents of all ages in the host schools' area, these Family Centers provide a place where adults and children can learn and benefit from the community's resources and establish positive community connections. Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., Pennsylvania Power and Light, Kutztown University, the United Way of Greater Lehigh Valley, the Allentown School District, the Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth Services are all committed to working in partnership to efficiently utilize their 21st Century Community Learning Center grant award and to create positive outcomes for the community's children.

# "Better Education Is Everybody's Business"

Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley

If you are interested in learning how  
your business can be more involved in  
making after-school hours safe and  
drug-free, please call the Corporate  
Outreach Office at 202-205-8599 or  
visit our Web site:

[www.ed.gov/offices/OIIA/OIA](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OIIA/OIA)



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